

**Senate File 168 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 168

BY CHELGREN

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act repealing the option of voting straight party and  
2 including effective date provisions.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 49.37, subsection 1, Code 2011, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 1. For general elections, and for other elections in which  
4 more than one partisan office will be filled, the ~~first section~~  
5 ~~of the ballot shall be for straight party voting~~ arranged as  
6 provided in this section.

7 ~~a. Each political party or organization which has~~  
8 ~~nominated candidates for more than one office shall be listed.~~  
9 ~~Instructions to the voter for straight party or organization~~  
10 ~~voting shall be in substantially the following form:~~

11 ~~To vote for all candidates from a single party or~~  
12 ~~organization, mark the voting target next to the party or~~  
13 ~~organization name. Not all parties or organizations have~~  
14 ~~nominated candidates for all offices. Marking a straight party~~  
15 ~~or organization vote does not include votes for nonpartisan~~  
16 ~~offices, judges, or questions.~~

17 ~~b. Political parties and nonparty political organizations~~  
18 ~~which have nominated candidates for only one office shall~~  
19 ~~be listed below the other political organizations under the~~  
20 ~~following heading:~~

21 ~~Other Political Organizations. The following organizations~~  
22 ~~have nominated candidates for only one office:~~

23 ~~c. 1A. Offices shall be arranged in groups. Partisan~~  
24 ~~offices, nonpartisan offices, judges, and public measures shall~~  
25 ~~be separated by a distinct line appearing on the ballot.~~

26 Sec. 2. Section 49.57, subsection 2, Code 2011, is amended  
27 to read as follows:

28 2. ~~In the area of the general election ballot for straight~~  
29 ~~party voting, the party or organization names shall be printed~~  
30 ~~in upper case and lower case letters using a uniform font size~~  
31 ~~for each political party or nonparty political organization.~~  
32 ~~The font size shall be not less than twelve point type. After~~  
33 ~~the name of each candidate for a partisan office the name of~~  
34 ~~the candidate's political party shall be printed in at least~~  
35 ~~six point type. The names of political parties and nonparty~~

1 ~~political organizations may be abbreviated on the remainder of~~  
2 ~~the ballot if both the full name and the abbreviation appear~~  
3 ~~in the "Straight Party" and "Other Political Party" areas of~~  
4 ~~the ballot.~~

5 Sec. 3. Section 49.98, Code 2011, is amended to read as  
6 follows:

7 **49.98 Counting ballots.**

8 The ballots shall be counted according to the voters' marks  
9 on them as provided in sections 49.92 ~~to 49.97~~ and 49.93,  
10 and not otherwise. If, for any reason, it is impossible  
11 to determine from a ballot, as marked, the choice of the  
12 voter for any office, the vote for that office shall not be  
13 counted. ~~When there is a conflict between a straight party or~~  
14 ~~organization vote for one political party or nonparty political~~  
15 ~~organization and the vote cast by marking the voting target~~  
16 ~~next to the name of a candidate for another political party~~  
17 ~~or nonparty political organization on the ballot, the mark~~  
18 ~~next to the name of the candidate shall be held to control,~~  
19 ~~and the straight party or organization vote in that case shall~~  
20 ~~not apply as to that office.~~ A ballot shall be rejected if  
21 the voter used a mark to identify the voter's ballot. ~~For~~  
22 ~~each voting system, the~~ The state commissioner shall, by rule  
23 adopted pursuant to chapter 17A, develop uniform definitions of  
24 what constitutes a vote.

25 Sec. 4. REPEAL. Sections 49.94, 49.95, 49.96, and 49.97,  
26 Code 2011, are repealed.

27 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE UPON ENACTMENT. This Act, being deemed of  
28 immediate importance, takes effect upon enactment.

29 EXPLANATION

30 This bill eliminates the option of voting straight party  
31 for all candidates of a political party or nonparty political  
32 organization. The bill applies to the general election and  
33 elections at which more than one partisan office is to be  
34 filled.

35 The bill takes effect upon enactment.